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Book Review: The Indigo Children: The New Kids Have Arrived, edited by Lee Carroll and Jan Tober

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The Indigo Children: The New Kids Have Arrived
Lee Carroll and Jan Tober (Eds.)
Hay House Inc., California

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Ever heard of Indigo children? No? Well, they are super-duper, over-the-top, gifted and talented children. They are an evolution in childhood, largely restricted to the USA, which started sometime around the recent millennium – and have never before been documented! It is easy to pour scorn on the ideas expounded in this book edited by many Ph.D.'s and famous authors of bestselling books (hmm). The chapters are extremely short and do not tax the brain cells unduly. But there is hardly a page which has not caused me at least one raised eyebrow.

Typical behaviour of an Indigo child is as follows: "My wife and I tell Nicholas aged two that we love him. Sometimes he'll tell us that he loves us back, but more often Nicholas will agree with us, 'I love me too'." Signed by a dad (p.107). Identification is also relatively simple if you are sensitive: you can just look into their eyes and see what old souls they have.

Fortunately, the authors with their "very fine minds" provide advice on how to help these "system buster" children. One of the Ph.D.'s says, for example, "I've learned from my conversations with God and the angels to take excellent care of our bodies." And much more (p.138). Not for vanity, she insists, but to make us more receptive to divine guidance. What would she have done without that angelic advice? We also learn that directing children is OK for God but not for parents. They must never direct their progeny because the children know from birth who they are and where they are going. It is perfectly all right to guide them gently, but because the children are "smarter than you are" you will only be causing them much frustration and distorting their healthy development if you instruct them. This advice is quite specific. Never ever, for example, expect them to join the family business.

Schools which can cope with Indigos are to be found all over the world, where for example, "Students are honored, not the system." The Montessori system is one such. I imagine that Maria, that down-to-earth doctor, would be a stout opponent of the idea that the little ones under her system would be taught how to be super-duper gifteds. But in the end, what is going on in her name is not actually the Montessori Method.

There are sad chapters by people on the hardships of growing up Indigo. It seems that other cruder folk just don't give the Indigo child the understanding and love they crave. The book provides advice on how to distinguish Indigo from ADHD, and how to sort out problems without Ritalin, which is now lavishly prescribed across the Western World. In America, it is estimated that between the ages of 5-19, 1 in 30 has a prescription for Ritalin. But then, so many report this drug as giving them peace and opening windows in their mental life one would not wish to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

The book in no way convinced me that there is a brand new version of a child called an Indigo. I did wonder, though, about what makes the many authors tick. The examples given are typical of bright and lively children experimenting in making sense of the world. Love is strongly promoted, but if you believe that these children have "a divine origin and mission", you may be inclined to stand back in awe. But then, as another of the Ph.D.'s writes: "being alive is all about gaining experience, there are no wrong choices since we acquire wisdom no matter what we choose." Candide, like Elvis, is alive. It seems to me, though, that bright healthy children need more than love, freedom, and "honor." They need clear structure and help in their growing up to provide them with peace and happiness, and indeed success in life. Children need parenting. ♦